Denis Dyomkin
Ex-Reuters Senior Correspondent | Eurasia & Beyond | Eyewitness Archive
3yr • Edited •
#fieldmemoirs
* posted before joining GAC

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Here are Russian-language flashes aka alerts or "snaps" - Reuters' most urgent news breaks - that I hit the wire with back in 2016.👇
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Alerts History
27-Oct-2016 13:54:00 - ПУТИН--БРЯЦАНИЕ ЯДЕРНЫМ ОРУЖИЕМ ВРЕДНАЯ РИТОРИКА И Я ЕЕ НЕ ПРИВЕТСТВУЮ
27-Oct-2016 13:54:57 - ПУТИН--НАДО ИСХОДИТЬ ИЗ РЕАЛИЙ: ЯДЕРНОЕ ОРУЖИЕ - ФАКТОР ОБЕСПЕЧЕНИЯ МИРА
27-Oct-2016 13:55:18 - ПУТИН--ИСПОЛЬЗОВАНИЕ ЯДЕРНОГО ОРУЖИЯ ОЗНАЧАЕТ КОНЕЦ ВСЕЙ ЗЕМНОЙ ЦИВИЛИЗАЦИИ
27-Oct-2016 13:55:58 - ПУТИН--РОССИЯ БУДЕТ ПРИДЕРЖИВАТЬСЯ РЕЖИМА ЯДЕРНОГО НЕРАСПРОСТРАНЕНИЯ
27-Oct-2016 13:56:14 - ПУТИН--РОССИЯ "ВСЕГДА БУДЕТ ОТНОСИТЬСЯ ОТВЕТСТВЕННО" К СВОЕМУ ЯДЕРНОМУ СТАТУСУ - Reuters News

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In sum, Putin said he didn't welcome any nuclear sabre-rattling, calling such rhetoric "harmful." He made it clear that he saw atomic weapons as a factor in securing peace and vowed that Russia would always be responsible with its nuclear power status. The Russian leader stressed that using thermonuclear weapons would mean the end of all civilization on our planet.

Six months later, Putin was portraying himself as a dove in defence of North Korea, which has been using this kind of nuclear rhetoric for decades to keep the West on its toes. During his visit to China in May 2017, he urged the world to "stop scaring" the Hermit Kingdom - a day after it fired another ballistic missile that crashed into the Sea of Japan (see my report from Beijing).

It has been five years, and the world is now trying to guess whether Putin himself is ready to go nuclear after he ordered his country's atomic weapons put on alert amid the invasion of Ukraine. I wish I knew, too. But it's worth remembering his eight-year-old warning that the Kremlin was ready to use its nukes in a worst-case scenario during the 2014 annexation of Crimea.

Some argue that this is just a North Korean-style rhetorical device and that it's more important to watch what he does, not says. However, this skepticism has been proven wrong, especially with the brutal war on Ukraine - as an English poet said, "What is now proven was once only imagined." Moscow has stated unequivocally that it would not hesitate to utilize tactical nuclear weapons in a regional conflict.

But how would the West react if Russia used a low-yield tactical nuclear weapon and fired it over a sparsely populated/desolate area as part of its warfare to scare the world and raise the stakes even higher?

However insane, it wouldn't be aimed directly at any of the Western capitals; so the ball would be in their court. I suspect that Putin sincerely hopes to get away with it, and for a good reason, unfortunately. It seems we've reached the point where it's completely irrational to expect anything rational from a world pariah who has his bunker ready and hopes to outlast his enemies in any doomsday scenario and has never made a secret of it.

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hashtag
#Historical_Journalism

Putin says world needs to talk to North Korea not threaten it
reuters.com

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Six years on. “The strengthening of the Russia-North Korea alliance comes at an opportune time for two countries with very few allies and a shared adversary in the United States,” said Jean H. Lee, a recent senior fellow on the Koreas at the Wilson Center. “It’s the resurrection of a traditional alliance that serves the strategic interests of both Putin and Kim.”
https://www.nytimes.com/2023/09/04/us/politics/putin-kim-meeting-russia-north-korea-weapons.html

Kim Jong-un and Putin Plan to Meet in Russia to Discuss Weapons (Published 2023)

Russia seeks more weaponry for its war in Ukraine, and a North Korean delegation recently traveled to Russia by train to plan for Mr. Kim’s visit this month, officials say.

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So, some seven months into the war: that “very dangerous nuclear gamble,” as an EU executive put it, is on, with the cold-blooded dictator upping the ante the way some of us have predicted long before 😕
https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/putin-signs-decree-mobilisation-says-west-wants-destroy-russia-2022-09-21/

Putin escalates Ukraine war, issues nuclear threat to West

President Vladimir Putin on Wednesday ordered Russia's first mobilisation since World War Two and backed a plan to annex swathes of Ukraine, warning the West he was not bluffing when he said he'd be ready to use nuclear weapons to defend Russia.

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As a follow-up to this:

“The Globe and Mail: What are the Western countries meant to take away from everything that Putin has said and done in the last few days, Mark?

- Globe's Mark MacKinnon: We're heading towards a real inflection point. [...] If Mr. Putin escalates again, if he uses chemical weapons or nuclear weapons of any sort, what will the West do? And Joe Biden was asked that pretty directly at the 60 minutes [interview] last weekend. His answer was: well, I am not gonna tell you, but it will be consequential. I am not sure there is a playbook for how we will respond to a - quote, end quote - "limited" nuclear conflict other than to head straight toward the Cuban missile crisis sort of situation."

Great insight overall - highly recommended.
https://podcasts.apple.com/ca/podcast/the-decibel/id1565410296?i=1000580407340
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